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Once upon a time, about fifteen years ago, there wasn't a women's movement. The media hadn't coined the sneer phrase, "women's lib." Women got unequal pay for equal work and didn't protest. Corporate annual reports did not brag that their companies had affirmative action programs for minorities and women.

Jack Parr (remember him?--he was before Johnny Carson) Jack Parr could comment about the size of a woman's breasts without a peep from his audience. Housewives who ran for public office were an oddity. And even in burgeoning radical nooks across the country, "the girls can do the typing," was heard.

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And we as women were merely the consummate consumers. We did not participate actively in the theorizing nor in the creation of possible alternative futures. We did not even perceive ourselves as a viable constituency that early AT theorists would address. "Women in Solar?" Such a panel was inconceivable. What has happened over these 15 years? Why has our self-concept changed? I think it is important to understand why and how we got from there to here. It is particularly important to see how our own political history enabled us to gain the self-confidence necessary to carry out the things we need to do.

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During the 60s, a few of us became a part of the anti-imperialist radclib counter-culture--now called the male left. Then our heroes were all who defied the establishment, from Abbie Hoffman to Dr. Spock, from the Weathermen to the Black Panthers and Young Lords, from Julian Bond to Mark Rudd. We sailed with the Venceremos Brigade, defied police in Chicago, extolled Ho Chi Minh, carried the red flag of revolution. We wore our jeans and army shirts defiantly and marched and chanted down barricaded streets. And, funny thing, within this subculture, we still typed, and cooked, and wiped the noses of our children.

I lived a very schizophrenic life back then, sophisticated New York professional by day, aspiring revolutionary by night. The contradictions were overwhelming. During involvement in a CR group for more than a year, these contradictions became more and more apparent, and more and more unlivable. While other women already had joined and confronted each other within NOW, or were engaged in more militant actions, I stayed within the security of my male-left spawned CR group. I was not ready, able or willing to give up certain of the privileges that I had fought so hard for.

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Certain realities, however, could not be ignored. I had no more status as a woman within the male left subculture than I had within my family, my traditional job or my relationships with men. I sat on my hands ~~at~~ during interminable political meetings just as I sat on my hands at professional meetings. If I ever got the nerve to speak, I wasn't listened to within our political group in the same way that I wasn't listened to by any man with whom I had a relationship. My CR group made possible a dawning awareness of those political realities that I, as had so many women, ignored, avoided or felt helpless to deal with. CR enabled me to confront myself and challenge the way I lived my life.

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I left New York then, eventually came to Washington, was one of the founders of Quest: a feminist quarterly. I still work with Quest. I still am a women's movement activist and organizer. I haven't burned out...yet. But something has shifted in my priorities since I began working with NCAT more than two years ago. I am also part of the AT movement, a part of the environmental movement. I'm an organizer of the Feminist Anti-Nuclear Task Force. We wrote a paper prior to the May 6th March on Washington on why nuclear power is a feminist issue. Nuclear power, solar, conservation...all are feminist issues. I believe feminism is a world view, a view that embraces ideas from other movements but is not limited to those ideas. I see myself as a global feminist and have been working the last couple of years

to develop a theory of feminist politics that is global. Much of my energy these days has gone towards talking and writing and working towards pulling our movements together, looking at what we share politically rather than looking at what appears to divide us. It goes without saying that all of us--as feminists, as solar practioners, as appropriate technologists--struggle against the oppression and exploitation of the many by the few, of the public by the private.

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I believe we face a culture more in love with death than life. In her recent book, Gyn/Ecology, Mary Daly makes the shattering observation that the English language has a word for death-love--necrophilia--but none for life-love. She recommends biophilia. Our means for expressing biophilia are different, fortunately, because ~~all~~ we all need to attack on many fronts. But each of our movements knows that people are linked to each other and to our environemnt in a delicate, two-way balance, and that our survival depends on nurturing it.

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I think we also agree that we must reverse the deadly competitive ethic in which we live. We recognize, maybe intuitively at this point, that our thought and social processes are dominated by a 2-sided view of things: me/you, flesh/spirit, body/mind, female/male, human/earth, rich/poor, black/white. We have begun to sense that these dichotomies are misleading, and to realize that they are essential in a competitive, exploitative ethic. They are essential to see things in a zero/sum way, where your loss is my gain. Finally, I believe each of our movements recognizes that our health depends on control over our own lives, on reclaiming our capacities to observe, think, theorize, act. We recognize that expropriating this control is the single most important reason that we face global annihilation.

Many of these ideas were expressed by a fellow Quest worker, Sidney Oliver, in a presentation she made at ACT'79 in DC. To her, the bottom line is empowerment. We've been conditioned to think of power in just one way, as power-over, a limited commodity, where more for you means less for me, and where the more I have, the better off I am. The object of power-over is to control and exploit. Power-to, on the other hand, is giving power as we use it. Empowerment is basic to life-love. Women, who've been the caretakers for centuries, know that the basic ingredient in nurturing is enriching rather than depleting. We know that the more we regenerate and recycle, the less there'll be to clean up. Empowerment is pretty scarce in a competitive culture. In fact, it

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contradicts the competitive ideal that makes more of differences than it does of similarities: it is hard to give power to another.

Appropriate technologists stress technologies that regenerate energy as they employ it, and that empower through fostering local self-reliance. Environmentalists stress the need to empower earth by caring for her, and to give power to ourselves by pooling rather than opposing our energies. Feminists stress that replacing the dominating, competitive and dichotomous point of view with power-to, is really the only viable act. The issue is not whether to have technology or not. The issue is not whether to have solar or not. The issue is the values that shape technology, that xxk shape solar and

ends of the cycle. The solution is to alter the present values of death-love.

I organized a series of "Women and Technology" workshops at the ACT'79 Fair, and one of the workshops was called "The Built Environment," where a number of architects participated. One of the panelists was a woman named Hadley Ann Smith from the Mississippi R&D Center. I would like to share some of what she said during the workshop. I think it very pertinent to what I've been saying.

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"We must be concerned," she said, "as much about the forms of our communication as the content. We are so mesmerized by the pushbutton, transistorized ^{Society} where the grid is automatically there that we don't think about creating another whole grid to put our stuff in." Over and over she emphasized that we appear to be so busy talking about ourselves and developing our skills that we don't realize that we first have the obligation to create a better system in which to develop our skills. "We have to do it all," she said, and we have to do more of it, faster than ever before, and better, and for all people. Women and men have to get on the stick."

Hadley talked about the emerging paradigm, our emerging paradigm, which she calls "a complete antithesis of the product-oriented society using the present grid. It's about process, it's about expansionism, it's about simplifying our lives, it's about issues of cooperation at all costs instead of competition at all costs, not more materialism and acquisition as expression of wealth and well-being, not by a controlling elite, where you have top-down management, with the people at the top calling the shots and the people at the bottom doing the work. It's about comprehensive planning, holistic thinking, shared cooperation, all these things that ^{she} a designer knows automatically. We must apply these things not only to our immediate needs but to our environment as well.

In her conclusion, Hadley said, that "in order to bridge these gaps between basic assumptions of a worn-out paradigm that is still, of course, dominant, and the emerging paradigm we want to bring about, we can't just have wishful thinking, we have to do all the scut-work. While we have the capacity, however, I am very concerned that we do not have the will to make these changes in our values to give up the pushbutton luxuries that we have learned to need. I spend 3/4 of my time teaching my design students behavior and only 1/4 time teaching them skills, because unless our values change, it doesn't matter. It doesn't matter how powerful or alternative our vision is if we continue to jacket it in top-down management format."

Technology does not exist outside of human values, and using the phrase human values tends to erase the fact that dominant values are male rather than generic. Do we dare forget that the reason for both technology and male hegemony has been power-over and exploitation? Do we dare forget that anthropology, defined as the study of man, is precisely that, and that the course of history reveals no valid distinction between the development of man and the development of technology? Do we dare suppress the shock of recognition we feel as women, hearing the twin litany, mother/earth/earth/mother while witnessing our common exploitation and rape?

Or do we ignore the meaning in the origins of the words ecology and technology. Ecology, from the Greek, oikos, meaning household. Technology, from the Greek, teknikos, meaning man/made. Such memories, I think, may make the connections among our movements a little clearer.

To bring ~~xxxx~~ all of this to some kind of conclusion, I believe that the business of appropriate technology, the business of environmentalism, the business of feminism is ultimately to change the dominant worldview, to shift ourselves from death-oriented mastery and exploitation, to life-oriented empowerment and reciprocity. I believe that our movements completely and profoundly challenge the existing worldview. Together we question the motive

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force under which we live, the network of assumptions and values that govern our collective existence. A worldview is best known by its actions. And the worldview, or motive force we live under, and which connects us linearly to the past and laterally to most other cultures, is the ethic of domination and exploitation. Begun in what I believe to be the first dichotomy-- male/rational vs. female/natural--this values heritage will not change until we find new and positive definitions for the fundamental links between women and nature, until men are compelled to recognize and affirm their place within the ecological cycle and relinquish their cosmic separatism.

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~~As~~ business as women in~~s~~ solar, as women in appropriate technology, is to change all that. Not to do away with technologies, but to redefine and reorient them. Not to replace the power-over political struggle with another, changed only in gender, but to redefine in all that we do, the relation of people to people and of people to earth. And, if the three objectives outlined earlier are realized, that is biophilia, cooperation, empowerment,

then we may very well stand together, work together,

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